

Testimony of  
Christa Allard  
Before the  
Select Committee on Children  
March 1, 2012

**In Support of S.B. 194, AAC the Postponement of Jury Duty for Breastfeeding Mothers**

My name is Christa Allard, and I'm mom to sweet, silly Nora. I have nursed Nora for all 10 months of her life, something I'm proud of and very fortunate to be able to provide for my daughter.

In those early weeks, breastfeeding your newborn is a nursing mother's sole priority. I spent the majority of Nora's first days camped out on my couch with her in my lap, nursing every two hours - sometimes every hour - establishing the milk supply that continues to sustain her to this day. It's imperative that new moms put this hard work in at the beginning, because it is what sets the groundwork for the duration of a breastfeeding relationship, whether that lasts two days or two years.

Even now after 10 months, it's difficult for me to be away from my daughter for more than a couple hours at a time. Though I was fortunate enough to have been gifted a double electric breast pump - a luxury not all moms can afford - and can on occasion leave expressed milk for someone else to feed Nora in my absence, more often than not Nora needs me there, and I tend to stay nearby. Breastfeeding provides more than nutrition for babies. For Nora, nursing provides a comfort that nothing else can; a refuge when she's overstimulated, a snuggle when she's sick or in pain, and love from a willing mother. She needs me more often than just at mealtime and there's simply no substitution for mom to a nursed baby.

Being away from Nora for hours on end, let alone for days as jury duty may require, would jeopardize our breastfeeding relationship. Without the option to nurse my daughter or otherwise express breast milk, my supply would decrease and I would no longer make enough milk to keep up with Nora's demand. It should be up to the mother and child as to when they are mutually ready to transition away from breastfeeding; they shouldn't be forced into it because they are also performing a civic duty.

I've figured out how to do a lot of things while nursing Nora (including writing this testimony) but serving on a jury isn't one of them. Please consider supporting SB 194 and breastfeeding moms in the state.

Thank you,

Christa Allard  
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